**Tribals in the Country**

2857. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the approximate number of tribes at present in the country;

(b) whether all these tribes are Scheduled Tribes and enjoy the benefits available to them; and

.(c) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBALAFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): (a) to (c) There are 706 tribal communities which, along with their 874 sub-groups/ synonyms, have been notified as Scheduled Tribes in different States and UTs of the country under Article 342 of the Constitution. Only those tribal communities which are notified under Article 342 of the Constitution are entitled to enjoy the benefits available for STs.

**Amendment in the Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill**

2858. SHRI URKHAO GWARA BRAHMA: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Scheduled Tribe (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill drafted earlier is going to be changed and the right will now include not only tribals but all the forest dwellers;

(b) if so, whether it will not be dilution of basic objective of the Bill; and

(c) whether it will be possible to prevent the encroachments in the forest under such generalized law in future?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): (a) to (c) The Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill, 2005 introduced in the Lok Sabha on 13.12.2005 was referred to a Joint Committee of Parliament. The Joint Committee of Parliament, which examined the said Bill, presented its report to the Lok Sabha on 23.5.2006, which was also laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha on the same day. The Joint Committee